

RECEIVED
OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Portland, OR, 97216

U.S. EPA
ATTN: Harbor Comments
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97205

AUG 17 2016

EPA-REGION 10

2506

I'm skeptical of anything that doesn't give nature a chance to remedy itself, or at least try. It's nature and we need to respect it. We often tend to want everything remedied quickly, but the quick remedy can upset nature's processes and make things even worse. This is the case with the EPA's current plan to clean up the hazardous materials at the bottom of the Willamette River where it runs through downtown Portland. This area was designated a Superfund Site years ago, and now the EPA wants to remove silt and materials from the riverbed and truck it off to a landfill. To me, this seems like overkill. We don't need to shoot ourselves in the foot with a long, expensive cleanup project.

A study done in 2014 showed that the river's own natural restoration process has gone a long way toward healing it. It confirmed that there's been at least a 40% reduction in contaminants since the EPA's earlier studies in 2004. The EPA has not taken this important new information into consideration in developing its cleanup plan. They are basing their plan on old data. That doesn't make any sense. Their aggressive plan will cause more harm than good. It could actually reverse all the progress in the river's healing that's taken place over the last decade or so.

It would be very costly to both residents and businesses in Portland and to Portland Harbor. The Willamette is the center of so much activity here in Portland. My family uses it regularly for recreational activities. There are so many uses for the river, from fishing, to kayaking, to Dragon Boats. The waterfront is an important tourist destination. Every time we're down at the river, there are many visitors at the waterfront. If the river were to become a construction zone and even be closed down for extended periods of time, that tourism would suffer and the businesses that depend on it would be negatively affected. Portland Harbor and the large commercial vessels that use the river would also be seriously impacted. It's not like they could go elsewhere; there's only one way in and out.

The Willamette is our river. It's a part of our community, and it's important that we have a say in what's going to be done there. I've lived in Portland my entire life, and I feel, as I'm sure many others do, that a less aggressive approach with more local control and input is what is needed. We need to save the Willamette and save Portland as well.

(b) (6)